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Polly Low

Panhellenism without Imperialism? Athens and the Greeks before and after Chaeronea.

Abstract

This article explores the shifting definition(s) of Panhellenism in fourth century Athenian political discourse, and argues that the flexibility of the concept can help to explain how the Athenians are able to continue to utilise this idea in their political arguments, even in the rapidly changing interstate environment of the late Classical and early Hellenistic period. Close analysis of the deployment of Panhellenic arguments before and after Chaeronea, and in the final decade of the century, throws further light on the ways in which Athens' use of this ideology both responds to and shapes their position in Greek interstate society.

Keywords: Panhellenism; imperialism; freedom; Athens; epigraphy; honours

1. Introduction

In an important and still influential article, published in 1976, Shalom Perlman explored the relationship between two of the most visible themes in the interstate politics of Classical Greece: the quest for empire, and the rhetoric of Panhellenism. '*Panhellenism*', he concluded, 'was a tool of political propaganda, serving first and foremost the hegemonial and imperialistic aims of the Greek *polis*'.¹ Panhellenism was an ideology (or a claim to an ideology), Perlman argued, which was deployed to secure the supremacy of one Greek *polis* over others, not to achieve political unity, still less equality, among the Greeks; this is a pattern of behaviour which can be traced throughout the Classical period, from Athenian imperial propaganda during the Delian League, via Sparta's incursions into Asia Minor in the early fourth century, to the coming of Philip II and Alexander III of Macedon.

In the discussion which follows, I take as my starting point the assumption that Perlman was essentially correct to see a significant and recurring connection between imperial ambition and

* This article began life as a contribution to a Cambridge colloquium on Panhellenism: I am grateful to Michael Scott for the invitation to tackle the subject, and to him and other participants in the conference for their responses to my initial thoughts. I am indebted also to colleagues in Manchester and to the reviewers and editors of *Historia* for their helpful suggestions.

¹ Perlman 1976: 30.

Panhellenic rhetoric. My aim in this article is to explore in more detail the way in which this connection operates in Athenian political discourse, especially in the latter part of the fourth century BC. In doing so, I hope to draw attention to two important developments in the rhetoric of Panhellenism, and in its relationship with political power. In the first part of this article, I explore the way in which the definition of Panhellenism is stretched not only to include enemies other than Persia but also (and more significantly) to exclude the necessity of collective Greek action. That is: not only need Panhellenism not have unity as its outcome – as Perlman already noted – but it might not necessarily even involve unity as one of its methods. This progressive redefinition of the concept, I argue, allows Athens to continue to assert a position of Panhellenic leadership long beyond the point when their diminishing political power should, logically, have made such claims impossible. The second part of the article focuses more closely on the relationship between these Panhellenic claims and Athens' position both as aspirational imperialist and as a subordinate member of another (Macedonian) empire. Here, I aim to outline both the changes and – perhaps more notable – the continuities in Athenian conceptions (or assertions) of the connection between Panhellenism and power. My suggestion is that tracing in detail the use of Panhellenism in this period can help us both to chart and to comprehend the Athenian response to their changed position in the Greek world, as well as more fully to understand the persistence of Panhellenic language in Athens beyond the end of the Classical period.

2. Defining and Redefining Panhellenism

2.1 *Homonoia*, freedom and the war against Persia

In most modern definitions, political Panhellenism is taken to be 'the belief that the various Greek cities could solve their endemic political, social, and economic problems by uniting in common cause and conquering all or part of the Persian Empire.'² There is, in other words, a necessary, and mutually reinforcing, connection between the unity of the Greek *poleis* and a collective, aggressive campaign against an external enemy.

This idea is most famously associated with Isocrates (although he is far from unique in proposing it),³ and most easily exemplified by his writings. In the *Philip*, for example (a text

² Flower 2000a: 97-8; more generally on the history and problems of defining 'Panhellenism': Mitchell 2007: xv-xxi

³ On the precursors to 'Isocratean' Panhellenism, see Flower 2000b (who traces the origins of this theme back to the immediate aftermath of the Persian Wars); see also Mitchell 2007: ch. 5.

seen by some as the culmination of Isocrates' Panhellenic thought),⁴ Isocrates sums up the way in which he thinks a Panhellenic campaign should function:

One must do nothing until one finds the Greeks doing one of two things:
either undertaking the expedition or offering full support to those who are
undertaking it ... Therefore those who plan wisely must not wage war
against the Persian King until someone has effected reconciliation among
the Greeks and put a stop to the madness which now afflicts them (Isoc.
Philip 86-8).

The concept of *homonoia* – fellow-feeling, or unity of purpose – recurs in Isocrates' descriptions of this style of Panhellenism. Greek unity and Greek success against Persia are inseparable, and mutually reinforcing, elements: Persia cannot be defeated until the Greeks are united, and a campaign against Persia will provide the best mechanism for creating that unity⁵

Although the extent to which Isocrates' ideas directly influenced any fourth-century politician can be questioned,⁶ it is clear that similar views did have an impact on both the conduct and the rhetoric of interstate politics throughout the classical period. According to Thucydides (I.96.1), the early propaganda of the Delian League cultivated the twin ideas of a unified Greek alliance and a war of revenge against Persia.⁷ A similar theme appears in Xenophon's portrayal of Agesilaus' campaigns of the 390s: the Spartan king, according to Xenophon's surely over-optimistic assessment, won widespread support among the Greeks for his policy of taking the war over to Persian territory and seeking revenge on Persia for the wrongs done in the previous century (*Ages.* 1.8).⁸ The campaigns of Alexander the Great can be seen as the

⁴ For this view, see especially Dobesch 1969, Payrau 1971. More generally on Isocrates and Panhellenism, see Mathieu 1925: chs. 5 & 6; Hamilton 1980: 95-8; Flower 2000b: 93-6; Bouchet 2014: 132-54.

⁵ The connection between *homonoia* and war against Persia appears throughout Isocrates' writings: see, for example, *Panegyricus* 3; *Antidosis* 77; *Philip* 16, 40, 141; *Panathenaicus* 42, 77, 217; that Isocrates himself saw this as a defining feature of his policy is implied by his summary of his career at *Panath.* 13 ('I have led the way in speeches which urge the Greeks to *homonoia* among themselves and war against the barbarians'). There is some development in Isocrates' view of the causal relationship between *homonoia* and victory over Persia: earlier speeches are less insistent than the *Philip* on *homonoia* as a precondition for success, and place more emphasis on it being an outcome of victory over Persia (see Perlman 1969; on *homonoia* in Isocrates see also Dillery 1995: 54-8; Bouchet 2014: 171-8).

⁶ Sakellariou 1980: 134; for fuller discussion of Isocrates' political agenda, Too 1995.

⁷ The question of the sincerity or longevity of the anti-Persian rhetoric of the Delian League is too large to explore here, but for a good analysis of Thucydides' presentation of the League's original objectives, see Rawlings 1977.

⁸ The Panhellenic aspect of Agesilaus' campaign is more strongly visible in the *Agesilaus*, but identifiable in the *Hellenica* too (e.g. in Agesilaus' decision to emulate Agamemnon's pre-campaign sacrifices at Aulis: *Hell.* III.iv.3): see Cawkwell (1976) 66-71, Cartledge (1987) 180; more generally on Xenophon's representation of Panhellenism, Dillery (1995) ch. 3. For a more pessimistic assessment of Agesilaus' success in unifying the Greeks, see Isocrates *Philip* 88 (below, pp. 000-000).

culmination of this policy: like the Athenians and Spartans before him Alexander found in the language of aggressive Panhellenism both a justification for a war (ostensibly a war of revenge) against Persia, and a means by which to insist on the necessity of collective Greek support for his war.⁹

The ideal of unity, harnessed in the service of a war of vengeance against Persia, is one distinctive feature of Panhellenic language in the fifth and earlier fourth centuries. A second, perhaps even more prominent, theme is the promise of freedom. The claim that the fight against Persia was also a fight for freedom (or against slavery) can be traced back at least to the immediate aftermath of the Persian Wars,¹⁰ and the two concepts remain closely linked for the rest of the Classical period (and beyond).¹¹ Isocrates projects this view of Panhellenic, anti-Persian action back into the past (so that, for him, the Battle of Plataea was one fought by the Greeks, and particularly the Athenians, in order to secure Greek freedom (12.93)); and he also makes it a part of his forward-looking Panhellenic propaganda (Philip, for example, is encouraged to undertake a campaign against Persia ‘in the cause of freedom’ (ἐπ’ ἐλευθερίᾳ: 5.139)). As with the ideal of *homonoia*, the objective (or claimed objective) of freeing the Greeks from Persian enslavement is not restricted to Isocratean rhetoric: it seems very likely that it formed part of Athens’ justification for the creation of the Delian League;¹² it surfaces again in Xenophon’s description of Agesilaus’ activities in Asia Minor in the 390s;¹³ and it is still visible, albeit less dominantly so, in accounts of Alexander’s campaigns.¹⁴ However, although the

⁹ The motif of revenge is particularly visible in the stories of Alexander’s burning of Persepolis (Arrian *An.* III.18.12, D.S. XVII.72.2-3, Plut. *Al.* 38.2-4), though it was employed before that too (e.g. by Philip in the immediate aftermath of Chaeronea, according to D.S. XVI.89.1-2). For Alexander’s desire to emphasise the Panhellenic element of his campaign (at least in its early stages), note, e.g., the conspicuously harsh punishments given to those Greeks captured fighting on the Persian side: Arrian *An.* I.16.5. Generally on Alexander’s use of Panhellenism, see Flower 2000a.

¹⁰ See, for example, the language of the Simonidean epigrams on the Persian Wars: the Athenians at Marathon saved Greece from ‘the day of slavery’ (δούλιον ἔμαρ: *IG* I³ 503/4, A.I, line 2 = *FGE* XXa, line 4); the Greeks who fought in 480 and 479 are praised for ‘rescuing the cities from hateful slavery’ (δουλοσύνας στυγεράς ῥυσάμενοι πόλιας: D.S. XI.33.2 = *FGE* XVIIb, line 4); see further Mitchell 2007: 10-11, and, on the wider context of the association of Greek identity with freedom (and Persian with slavery) in this period, Raaflaub 2004: 59-89.

¹¹ On freedom propaganda (especially as applied to the Asia Minor Greeks) in the Classical Period see Seager & Tuplin 1980; in the Hellenistic period, Seager 1981; on its use in Greek politics in the Roman period, Dmitriev 2011.

¹² Note in particular the complaints of the Mytileneans at Thuc. III.10.3: ‘we did not become allies of the Athenians for their enslavement of the Greeks, but we became allies of the Greeks for their liberation from the Persians (ἐπ’ ἐλευθερώσει ἀπὸ τοῦ Μήδου)’; see further, Raaflaub 2004: 87-8.

¹³ For example at Xen. *Ages.* 1.33, in the context of Agesilaus’ attack on (/liberation of) Sardis; cf. also *Ages.* 1.35.

¹⁴ Diodorus (at XVII.24.1) makes Alexander claim that he was fighting for the cause of Greek freedom; compare also Theopompus, *FGH* 115, F253, for the argument that those who died fighting with Alexander did so ‘for the sake of your kingship and the freedom of the Greeks’ (ὕπερ τῆς σῆς βασιλείας καὶ τῆς τῶν

connection between Panhellenism and freedom is pervasive, the way in which this connection is presented is strikingly fluid; in particular, the identity of the enemies of freedom, as we will see, is notably open to variation. Indeed, the shifting application of the ideal of liberation is, in many ways, the key to understanding the great flexibility, and therefore vitality, of Panhellenic ideology in the fifth and fourth centuries.

2.2 Panhellenism without Persia

What, then, does this flexibility look like in practice? The version of Panhellenism outlined in the previous section – one directed against Persia, portraying Persia as the enemy of Greek freedom, and conceptualised as involving aggressive, united action against its target – is undoubtedly important in the rhetoric of interstate politics throughout the Classical period. But other versions of Panhellenism were available – or at least, capable of being appealed to.

The first variant form of Panhellenism is distinguished, above all, by its focus on defence rather than attack: the freedom and well-being of Greece still needs to be secured, but from a tangible threat rather than the more nebulous menaces envisaged in the Isocratean model of Panhellenism. A further important difference which follows from this basic point, and which is crucial in explaining the longevity of this type of Panhellenism, is that there is much more scope for variation in the identity of the threat. It might still be Persia, as it is, for example, for Demosthenes in his speech *On the Symmories*.¹⁵ But the danger can equally well be represented as coming from some other external source – most obviously and most pervasively in Demosthenes' assembly speeches, Macedon. In *On the Chersonese* for example, Demosthenes argues that the Athenians must aim:

to shake off this overwhelming and unbearable idleness, to contribute money and call upon our allies, to see to and provide for the permanent upkeep of our army so that, just as Philip has a force ready to attack and enslave all the Greeks, so may you have one ready to save and help all (8.46).

The shift of enemy from Persia to Macedon is not, perhaps, all that radical: for some, at least (notably Demosthenes) both were equally barbarian, external threats to the well-being of the

¹⁵ Ἑλλήνων ἐλευθερίας). On the (surprising?) lack of emphasis on the theme of freedom in accounts of Alexander's campaigns, see Seager 1981: 106-7; Flower 200a: 118-19.

¹⁵ See esp. Dem. 14.3, 31-40.

Greeks.¹⁶ But the threat to Greek freedom could also be conceived of as coming from within the Greek world. This type of argument was (according to Thucydides) already deployed – albeit not always very effectively – by the Spartans in the Peloponnesian War. At II.8.4, Thucydides claims that Spartans were perceived as the liberators of Greece (from Athenian oppression), a perception picked up on by the Mytileneans’ in their appeal for Spartan support for their rebellion from Athens in 428/7 (III.10.3, 13.7), and played on to great, if also conspicuously coercive, effect by Brasidas in his campaigns in northern Greece: ‘if you are going to oppose both your own freedom and that of the rest of Greece’ (Brasidas warns the city of Acanthus, in his attempt to persuade them willingly to accept ‘liberation’ by his army), ‘that would have dire consequences...’ (IV.85.4).¹⁷

Conversely, in the fourth century, a version of the same rhetoric is deployed by Athens against the new (alleged) enemies of Greek freedom: Sparta. The ‘prospectus’ of the Second Athenian League (RO 22, IG II² 43) claims as one of the League’s purposes the desire that ‘the Spartans allow the Greeks (τὸς Ἑλλήνας) to be free and autonomous, and to live at peace’ (lines 9-11),¹⁸ while an Athenian decree relating to Mytilene (RO 31, IG II² 107; passed in 369) gives an indication of what that commitment might look like in practice:

Reply to the envoys who have come that the Athenians fought for the freedom of the Greeks ([ὕπερ τῆς ἐλευθερίας] τῶν Ἑλλήνων); and that when the Spartans were campaigning against the Greeks, contrary to the oaths and the agreement, they themselves went to help, and they called on the other allies to

¹⁶ *Third Philippic* 30-46 is a good example of Demosthenes both emphasising Philip’s non-Greek status, and equating the (fifth-century) war against Persian barbarians with this new struggle against Macedonian barbarians. Compare Theopompus, *FGH* 115, F27: his claim that ‘Europe never bore such a man as Philip’ is (at best) double-edged: Flower 1994: 98-104. On Demosthenes and Panhellenism, see Dunkel 1938, Luccioni 1961, Perlman 1976: 23-5; on Demosthenes’ redefinition of Panhellenic enemies, Green 2004 (who, however, sees this change as a dilution of the Panhellenic ideal, rather than a productive re-definition).

¹⁷ Brasidas’ skill in deploying the language of Greek freedom and Greek unity is (surely deliberately) portrayed as being in contrast to the ineptitude of other Spartan commanders, notably Alcidas (esp. at III.32.3). For a reading of Thucydides’ account of the Peloponnesian War as one which deliberately plays on and subverts Panhellenic ideas, see Price 2001. The idea is undoubtedly important to Thucydides’ conception of the war, but it is not a purely Thucydidean creation: note especially Xenophon’s narrative of the final action of the war – the destruction of Athens’ walls to the sound of flute-girls, since ‘that day was the beginning of freedom for Greece’ (Xen. *Hell.* II.ii.23).

¹⁸ Note that this representation of the Spartans as enemies of Greek freedom originally sat alongside a clause expressing friendship for the traditional holder of that role: the Persian King (on the content of the erased reference to the King’s Peace at lines 12-14, see RO *ad loc* (and cf. Cargill 1981: 28-32)). Concerns about over-idealisation of the Second Athenian League have led some scholars to downplay the Panhellenic element of this decree (Cargill (1981) 12-13), but assertions of Panhellenism are surely not inconsistent with self-interested exploitation.

offer the help due to the Athenians, keeping to their oaths, against those who were breaking the treaty (lines 40-9).¹⁹

By the last quarter of the century, the enemies of Greek freedom have shifted again. According to Hyperides, in his funeral oration for the dead of the Lamian War, they now include Boeotia and Euboea (6.11); those cities had been fighting alongside Macedon and therefore (in Hyperides' eyes) fighting against the freedom of the Greeks.²⁰ In fact, the identity of the enemy can even become completely irrelevant, as long as the basic cause – securing the freedom of Greece – remains consistent. So Demosthenes, in the *On the Crown*, can conflate all Athens' wars (fought against Greek and non-Greek enemies) into one unified Panhellenic crusade:

I pass over ten thousand examples I could mention: sea battles and land expeditions, campaigns from long ago and from our own times; in all of these our city engaged herself for the freedom and salvation of the rest of Greece (18.100).

The details of who was being fought are, here, immaterial to Demosthenes' argument; the important point is that, while the appearance of the threat might have changed, the threat itself – the risk of losing Greek freedom – has not, and neither has Athens' (or Demosthenes') consistent and implacable hostility to that threat.²¹

2.3 Panhellenism without *homonoia*

If the identity of the enemy can become notably fluid in this version of Panhellenism, so too can that of the members of the Panhellenic alliance, and with it the focus on unanimity – *homonoia* – which is such a strong feature of the Isocratean version of Panhellenic thought.²² Panhellenic leadership (or a claim to have exercised such leadership) does not, that is, necessarily entail the existence of Panhellenic followers, a situation which – while formally entirely illogical – seems to have been rhetorically plausible, and which is also crucial to understanding the persistence of this language throughout the Classical period.

While it is of course true that even Isocratean Panhellenism placed considerable emphasis on the role and status of a single, leading Greek state (and left considerable scope for the leader to

¹⁹ On the context and purpose of this decree, see Tonini 1989.

²⁰ Hyperides' re-shaping in this speech of language usually associated with the Persian War, and his application of it to the events and ideals of the Lamian War, is noted by Hermann 2009: 23-4.

²¹ A similar conflation of past (anti-Persian) and present (anti-Macedonian) Panhellenism seems to have been used in Hyperides' *Against Diondas*, p.1 line 32- p.2 line 2: in opposing Philip II, the Athenians were aiming to 'set the Greeks free by the risks that you ran as in the past' (tr. Carey et al 2008). On the relationship between this speech and Demosthenes *On the Crown*, see Todd 2009.

²² Above, n. 5.

use its position to demonstrate and enhance their own power and prestige),²³ Isocrates did at least count the support of other Greek states as a necessary foundation for such leadership. Agesilaus' expedition to Asia Minor, for example, was (according to Isocrates) necessarily bound to fail because the Spartan king's attempt to combine self-interested power-building with his Panhellenic project alienated the support which was vital to the project's success:

Agesilaus had two objectives and, although both were laudable, they were mutually incompatible and could not be carried out at the same time. For he had elected both to campaign against the Persian king, and to restore his friends to their cities and put them in charge of affairs. So the result of his actions on behalf of his friends was that the Greeks were caught up in trouble and danger and, because of the unrest which arose at home, did not have the time or the ability to fight against the barbarians (*Philip* 88; compare *To Archidamus* 11-14).

Other accounts (and especially other later fourth-century accounts) of Panhellenism, however, are notably less insistent on the importance of unanimity. The claim that total isolation is undesirable does not, to be sure, completely disappear from view: Demosthenes' version of the size and make-up of the anti-Macedonian army assembled at Chaeronea (18.234-8), for example, makes it clear that the Athenians' ability to persuade other Greeks to fight alongside them was still a matter of pride (and, conversely, that an allegation of alienating potential allies was still potentially damaging). Nevertheless, even here Demosthenes can claim that the fact that Athens provided a disproportionately large number of troops should be seen as a source of satisfaction not shame, using the experience of the Persian Wars as his paradigm:

Don't you know that of that famous fleet of triremes which fought for the Greeks in earlier times, which numbered three hundred ships in total, our city provided two hundred ... and she gave thanks to the gods that, when a shared danger surrounded all the Greeks, she herself had contributed twice as much as all the rest for the salvation of everyone (18.238).

Lycurgus' *Against Leocrates* (delivered in the same year as the *Crown*) shows that it was possible to go even further in downplaying non-Athenian contributions. Athens, he claims, was 'being deserted (ἐγκαταλείπομενοι) by all the Greeks' before the Battle of Salamis (1.70); her role at Marathon was to act as *prostates* – single champion – for the whole Greek world (1.104).²⁴

²³ Perlman 1976: 25-9

²⁴ This airbrushing of other Greeks from the Athenian narrative of the Persian Wars is not new: for an early and egregious example see the Athenians' speech at Sparta before the Peloponnesian War (Thuc.

Lycurgus' argument here is that, even though other Greeks were physically present at these Panhellenic encounters, they lacked Athens' total commitment to the Panhellenic cause. The Athenians, he claims, had to compel (ἀναγκάσαντες) the other Greeks to stay and fight with them at Salamis (1.70). Not only, therefore, can Athens' victory there be represented as a triumph belonging to the Athenians alone, it can also be presented as a victory achieved (paradoxically) over Athens' own, Greek, allies: 'our ancestors ... triumphed unaided (μόνοι) over both enemy and allies, in a way suitable to each, conferring a favour (εὐεργετοῦντες) upon one and defeating the other in battle' (1.70).

Panhellenic unity, insofar as it exists at all in these examples, is therefore more a product of coercion than of any real unanimity of purpose, and both the specific language and the general sentiment of *homonoia* is almost entirely absent.²⁵ Demosthenes emphasises the constant risk that those Greeks who had been persuaded to fight Philip might suddenly defect to the enemy (18.239); only Athens has the embedded sense of responsibility to the Greeks which would make it unthinkable for her to abandon the cause:

If it was necessary for someone to put a stop to these things, who else should have acted if not the Athenian *demos*? That was my policy and, when I saw Philip enslaving all of mankind, I opposed him, and I never ceased from advising you and urging you not to yield (18.72).²⁶

Perhaps the most striking example of this fundamentally unilateralist approach to Panhellenic unity comes in Hyperides' *Funeral Oration* for the dead of the Lamian (or Hellenic) War.²⁷ For Hyperides, Athens is:

like the sun, which visits the whole world, and separates the seasons as is proper, arranging everything for the best, and, where men are sober and prudent, provides for men's birth and disposing all things for the best, with provision, where men are virtuous and prudent, for their birth and

I.73-4) – although the other Greeks are at least allowed a shared in the Battle of Salamis here). For other fourth-century examples, see Walters 1980, Marincola 2007 (the latter noting, at 112-14, that it seems very likely that other Greek *poleis* were engaged in similar efforts to make their own contribution to the war the single most important).

²⁵ Demosthenes typically uses *homonoia* in the sense of unity within the polis (as, e.g., at 22.77); the reference to *homonoia* at 9.38 is the one place in the Demosthenic corpus where unity between, as well as within, Greek states seems to be implied. The word does not appear in Lycurgus *Leocr.* or in Hyperides *Epitaphios*, and is unattested in classical Athenian inscriptions (although it does appear in Hellenistic documents: see Thériault 1996, chs. 2 & 3).

²⁶ The argument that Athens is the only *polis* which can be relied on to perform this task recurs in this speech (see, e.g. 18.20, 99-101, 200-8), and in Demosthenes' assembly speeches (e.g. 1.25, 9.74).

²⁷ On the name of this war, see Ashton 1984.

nurture, for crops and all the other necessities of life; in just the same way our city continues to punish the wicked, to help the just, to allot to all men fairness in place of injustice, and at her own risk and expense to assure for the Greeks a common safety. (6.5)

The analogy here is one based on the unstinting provision of good things to the deserving: Athens showers benefits on the Greeks, and neither gets nor expects anything in particular in return.²⁸ But although one could characterise this as something approaching altruism, it is also possible to see something less benign in this arrangement: the sun – Athens – pours out these benefits whether or not anyone wants them, and in a manner and direction over which none of its beneficiaries have any control.

The sense which emerges from these literary sources, therefore, is that Athens' interest in Panhellenism is fundamentally Athenocentric; and this is further reinforced by the epigraphic record. Claims that the Athenians saw themselves as the defenders (and/or saviours) of the Greek world are not absent from inscriptions of this period: most notably (as we saw above), the 'prospectus' of the Second Athenian League makes a programmatic assertion that Athenian policy will be shaped around a commitment to defend the Greeks, while the Athenian response to the Mytilenean complaint of 369/8 (RO 31), indicates that this position retained at least some rhetorical force (even if the fact that the Mytileneans had cause to complain suggests that Athens' practical commitment to it was open to question). The Athenians are then (albeit to a very limited extent, to judge from the extant evidence) prepared in epigraphic contexts to claim that they have been acting in the best interests of the Greeks. What they are much less willing to do (again, to judge from the extant evidence) is to allow that non-Athenians might also have been inspired by such Panhellenic sentiments. Evidence for non-Athenians being credited with actions which have benefitted other Greeks is almost non-existent in the Athenian epigraphic record, amounting to (at best) three examples in the Classical period (from a corpus of c. 270 Athenian decrees honouring non-Athenians).²⁹ A decree of 394 (RO 11) honouring the Cypriot King Evagoras seems (although the text is very poorly preserved) to have praised him for acting as a Greek, on behalf of Greeks.³⁰ (Evagoras' position on the margins of the Greek world might have made it particularly important to emphasise both his ethnicity and his motivations

²⁸ On denial of reciprocity as a theme of Athenian interstate rhetoric, see Herman 1998, Missiou 1998.

²⁹ A figure calculated on the basis of material collected in Lambert 2006, 2007, Veligianni-Terzi 1997, covering the period from 451 (the date of the earliest extant example: *IG I³ 17*) to 322.

³⁰ Line 17: [_____ ὑπὲρ τῆς Ἑλλάδος Ἑλλήν [...]]; it is possible that a reference to Evagoras' relations with Greeks should also be restored in lines 11f, although the text here is even more fragmentary ([_____ Ἑλλ[η]νες Εὐ[] [α]γόρα...).

in this context.) Two further possible examples, again in honorific decrees, appear in the second half of the fourth century, although in both cases the references to Greeks are restored.³¹ Otherwise, though, the epigraphic record of the Classical period indicates a notable reluctance on the part of the Athenians to acknowledge non-Athenian benefactions to the Greeks.

This pattern persists into the early Hellenistic period. In 318/17, the Athenians posthumously re-affirmed the honours they had awarded to Euphron of Sicyon

... since Euphron, son of Adeas of Sicyon, has previously on every occasion continued to show himself a good man towards the people of Athens, both himself and his ancestors; and during the Greek war which the people of Athens began on behalf of the Greeks (ἐπὶ τοῦ πολέμου τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ, ὃν ἐ[ν]ε[σ]τήσατο ὁ δῆμος ὁ Ἀθηναίων ὑπὲρ τῶν Ἑλλήνων) ...; and when it happened that Greece suffered misfortune and garrisons were sent into the cities which had expelled them, he preferred death at the hand of his enemies, fighting for the democracy, rather than to see his own native city or the rest of Greece enslaved (*IG II² 448, 40-5, 52-6*).

The Greeks have, it is true, been helped by Euphron's action – but only indirectly. Euphron helped the Greeks not so much on his own initiative, or in his own right, as by providing his support to those who were really in charge of affairs – namely, the Athenians. In this decree (as in some of the literary examples discussed above), Athens reserves for herself the monopoly on Panhellenic benefaction.

Indeed, even this very limited expression of Panhellenic sentiment is epigraphically atypical. The original decree passed for Euphron (in 323/2; *IG III³ 1, 378*) has absolutely nothing to say about the Greeks (even though, presumably, it would have been equally possible to frame the Athenians' actions in those terms at the start of the Lamian War as it was at the end). Instead, it is the Athenians and their allies who are the focus of interest here; Euphron is praised for 'his excellence and his goodwill toward the People of Athens and the other allies' (13-15). And the terms of the first Euphron decree are far more representative of the bulk of Athenian decrees passed between the Battle of Chaeronea and the last decade of the fourth century: the vast majority of the Athenian decrees published throughout this period seem to have absolutely no

³¹ *IG III³ 1, 519* praises the honorand for assistance to Athenians '(and all?) Greeks' (line 14) sailing through the Hellespont (for the restoration, see Woodward 1956: 1-3, Lambert 2007, no.63). *IG III³ 1, 517* has a more certain reference to the Greeks (line 7), although Lambert 2007, no.109, is justifiably sceptical about the restoration (proposed for lines 6-7 in the previous edition of this inscription, *IG II² 270*) of a reference here to actions performed 'on behalf of the freedom of the Greeks'.

interest in attributing a Panhellenic dimension to the actions which they record or discuss. The omission is particularly notable in *IG II³ 1, 316 (RO 77)*, a decree honouring Acarnanian exiles, almost certainly for their participation in the Battle of Chaeronea. As we have seen, Athenian literary sources are insistent that this was a battle fought on behalf of all the Greeks; this is a line of argument which is visible also in the Athenians' epigraphic commemoration of the (Athenian) dead of that battle (*IG II² 5226*).³² But the Acarnanians are praised only for their friendship to the Athenian *demos* (line 9):

Since Phormio and Carphinas are hereditary friends of the Athenian people, and preserve the good will towards the Athenian people which their forefathers handed on to them... (9-11).

Athens may have been trying to save Greece at Chaeronea, in other words, but non-Athenians (or so this decree makes it seem) were interested only in helping Athens. Athens remains the sole supplier of good things for Greece.

How might this apparent lack of epigraphic Panhellenic engagement be explained? It is not the case, after all, that that inscribed texts are any less interested than our literary sources in asserting Athens' relevance to and pre-eminence in other parts of the Greek world. But these documents are certainly much more reticent in claiming that the Athenians are the proper judges of what counts as being in the best interests of the Greeks (if, that is, we read the act of honouring someone because he has 'done good things' for a particular community as an implied statement that the honouring power also has the capacity to judge what is good for that community). This apparent reluctance to claim this position of authority over the well-being of the Greeks initially seems rather out of step with the line consistently adopted by authors of Athenian literary texts. My suggestion, though, is that this pattern might be another consequence of the tendency to unilateralism which I argued for above: acknowledging, particularly in the context of an honorific decree, that a non-Athenian has done something to help the Greeks might undermine the claim that Athens (and Athenians) alone are responsible for securing the well-being of the Greeks. This, combined with the particular characteristics of the Athenian epigraphic habit in this period (above all, the fact that the vast majority of

³² The reference to the dead fighting for the salvation of Greece (line 3: ὡς ἱερὰν σώζειν πειρώμενοι Ἑλλάδα χώραν) is restored on the basis of the version of the epigram in *Anth. Pal.* VII.245; the sentiment is comparable with that of one of the inscribed Persian War epigrams (*IG I³ 503/4, A.I*, line 2: ἔσχον γὰρ πεζοί τε [καὶ ῥοκυτόρον ἐπὶ νεσ]ν / ἑλλάδα μ]ὲ πᾶσαν δούλιον ἔμαρ ἰδέν).

inscribed honorific decrees relate to the activities of non-Athenians),³³ results in an overall epigraphic impression of general disinterest in Panhellenic matters. In terms of content, then, the emphasis of the epigraphic record is indeed not quite consistent with that of the literary sources, but the underlying cause of this phenomenon – the obsession with the pre-eminence of Athenian actions – is of course entirely compatible with the views which we have seen expressed there.

What becomes particularly visible in Athenian discourse in the years from Chaeronea to the Lamian War is, in short, a notably solipsistic version of Panhellenism. A model of Greek unity emerges which is exclusively focussed on the status and honour of a single *polis*, and which also allows that city to plausibly claim a position of Panhellenic leadership even if they can actually count few (or no) Greek *poleis* as their allies. The distinctiveness of this position is especially striking when it is contrasted with those models of Panhellenism which make unanimity an essential part of it. However, it is also very clear that this style of unilateral Panhellenism does not emerge from nowhere; rather, it represents an elaboration of ideas which had been intrinsically tied up with Panhellenic claims for at least the preceding century: ideas, that is, which allowed that the Panhellenic community was always likely to be hierarchical, and that Panhellenic leadership might need to be imposed rather than freely embraced. The position of solitary Panhellenism which Athens (or some Athenians) reach by the 330s and 320s might, then, be illogical in its own terms, but it is reached by a process which does not require any radical political or rhetorical moves – and this, in turn, must be crucial in understanding why the idea of Panhellenism is able to endure, in the face of such dramatically shifting political realities.

3. Panhellenism, imperialism, and resistance to imperialism

3.1 Before and after Chaeronea

Claims about Panhellenism in this period, in Athenian discourse at least, are therefore still very closely tied up with claims to power and status in the interstate arena. But the more specific relationship between Panhellenism and imperialism in the years around Chaeronea needs more discussion – particularly because there seems to be a distinct shift in the way in which the connection between Panhellenism and empire is represented in this period. It is worth emphasising that this change is (as far as the extant evidence reveals) visible only in literary

³³ It is worth noting that the vast majority of inscribed honorific decrees from this period are honours for non-Athenians: Veligianni-Terzi 1997 lists, for example (for the period 451-322) 178 decrees of the Athenian *polis* honouring non-Athenians, and 20 honouring Athenians.

texts: the Athenian epigraphic record's general disinterest in the collective actions or aspirations of the Greeks remains unchanged for a few more years.³⁴ We are dealing, then, with a change in political representation rather than (necessarily) in real political action; but that change is still worth noting.

Demosthenes' pre-Chaeronea speeches repeatedly emphasise both the necessity of concerted Greek action, and the inevitability of Athenian leadership of that action (see, for example, 6.8-9; 9.28-9, 73-4; 10.46). On the other hand, Demosthenes is relatively circumspect in making too extravagant claims or too explicit connections between his proposed policy of Panhellenic action and any potential for Athens' future imperial revival. The reason for this is not, I would argue (for reasons I will address below), that either Demosthenes or his audience have entirely given up on such imperial dreams. The problem, rather, is that Philip's actions – the actions Demosthenes has to condemn as absolutely unacceptable – might look rather familiar to those accustomed to Athenian modes of behaviour: seeking to adopt a position of leader of the Greeks, while at the same time enhancing his own (self-interested) power (see the characterisation of Philip's actions at Dem. 4.10-11, for example). And, just as it is essential for Demosthenes to emphasise that Philip's claimed concern for Greek well-being is only a façade, so it is equally important not to give any hint that Athens' interest in Greek affairs might have a similar motivation. This concern is particularly clearly expressed in the speech *On the Navy Boards*: Athens (according to Demosthenes) needs to be wary of moving too quickly or too forcefully on behalf of the Greeks, for fear of alienating those very Greeks and driving them into the arms of the enemy out of fear of Athens (see, for example, the argument of Dem. 14.4). This is an early speech, and the enemy here is Persia rather than Macedon; nothing quite so explicit appears in the Macedonian speeches, but it does not seem unlikely that the same concern would still apply, and that it could explain why the connection between Panhellenic rhetoric and state power appears in unexpectedly muted, or even entirely negative, forms in Demosthenes' pre-Chaeronea speeches. Either claims to defend the Greeks should be viewed with suspicion (especially when they are made by Philip); or, when they are treated as genuine, they should be seen as ways in which imperialism can be thwarted rather than sustained. This latter approach provides the logic which underpins Demosthenes' striking account of the sequence of empires in the *Third Philippic* (9.23ff): Athenian, Theban, and Spartan attempts at empire all failed, and the reason they failed was because the rest of the Greeks got together to

³⁴ Discussed in Section 3.2, below.

curb their excesses. Panhellenism, in this speech, is (or should be) a check on imperial ambition, not a means for its expression.

After Chaeronea, though, there is small but significant change: the direct link between Panhellenic leadership and imperial power is allowed to resurface, and can be presented once more as a positive ideal. For Aeschines, the connection is seen as a missed opportunity: if things had worked out as they should, Athens would have secured a common peace, united the Greeks, and regained *hegemonia*:

You could have made that former peace, fellow citizens, supported by the joint action of a congress of the Greek states, if certain men had allowed you to wait for the return of the embassies which at that crisis you had sent out among the Greeks, with the call to join you against Philip; and in the course of time the Greeks would of their own accord have accepted your hegemony again (3.58).

Demosthenes, for obvious reasons, is more up-beat about the inherent value of the policy adopted. Athens, he insists, did the right – the inevitable – thing in attempting to combine her own supremacy with the salvation of the Greeks; the quest for ‘primacy, honour and renown’ (πρωτείων καὶ τιμῆς καὶ δόξης) recur in the *On the Crown* (18.66, 202-3) as the three necessarily connected things for which Athens had fought (‘in every generation’ and ‘without pause’: 18.203). The claim that Athens’ commitment to the Greek world is absolutely and unshakably embedded is not new; a very similar assertion appeared in the *Second Philippic* (6.8-9). But what has changed between the two speeches is the reason for Athens’ attitude: in the *Second Philippic* it was portrayed rather more idealistically – love of Greece is motivation enough; now, Athens’ concern for her own status is allowed to play a much more central role.

What seems to be happening, then, is that the visibility of the asserted connection between Panhellenism and imperialism is in inverse proportion to the likelihood of that connection having any real impact. This should perhaps not be too surprising: any worries which might have existed in Athens pre-338 about frightening off potential allies are now, surely, much less relevant, and Athens is so far from being a real imperial threat to anyone that it is now much less important to avoid seeming like one. On the other hand, the tradition of vague, self-centred, Panhellenic rhetoric is flexible enough to allow these ideas and assertions to persist, and even to dominate Athenian representations of their role in the world.

3.2 Panhellenism without imperialism?

I have argued so far that the Athenians' reluctance to allow other states a share in their Panhellenic posturing is apparently unchanged – indeed, if anything, amplified – by the upheavals of Chaeronea, and similarly undented by the experience of the Lamian War. But in the last decade of the fourth century, and more specifically in the period from 307 to 301, it is possible to detect a distinct change in Athens' attitude to (and claimed interest in) the Greeks.

The change is visible above all in the epigraphic record. In a break with past practice, the 'motivation' clause of honorific decrees, which, as has been seen, has until this point has tended to focus exclusively on benefits to the Athenian *polis* or *demos*, now becomes much more inclusive. In 307/6 the people of Tenos are honoured because 'they have been *euergetai* to the polis of Athens and to the other Greeks' (IG II² 466, lines 9-10).³⁵ Other decrees of this period add a third party, and, in doing so, give away what must lie behind this sudden outpouring of Panhellenic enthusiasm: *eunoia* (or *philotimia*, or similar virtues) is displayed to the Athenians, the Greeks, and to King Demetrius. IG II² 492, for example (a decree of 303/2) records honours for a certain Apollonides who 'does what is beneficial for the kings and the *demos* of Athens and all the other Greeks'.³⁶

It is, therefore, not very hard to spot the motivation for this apparent sudden interest in rewarding actions which help all the Greeks. This language is, if not dictated, then certainly inspired by Demetrius, is being enthusiastically employed by his Athenian followers, and has to be connected with the rhetoric of Panhellenic liberation being employed by Demetrius and Antigonus at the end of the fourth century. More specifically, it seems likely that there is a link between the appearance of this language in Athenian honorific decrees and the foundation of the Hellenic League in 302. If the restorations are to be trusted, this league claimed to be

³⁵ It is unclear exactly what the Tenians had done to provoke the award of this honour. Reger 1992: 365-8 suggests that they might have provided assistance in liberating Athens from Demetrius of Phaleron; cf. Habicht 1997: 69, n.7.

³⁶ The likelihood that this language is being used either with the aim of pleasing the Antigonids, or even at their explicit request, is enhanced by the fact that this decree is proposed by Stratocles, a particularly prolific decree-proposer who seems to have been willing to propose decrees according to Demetrius' specific requests (see, e.g., IG II² 486, lines 11-12, with Tracy 1995: 162-3; more generally on Athenian flattery for Demetrius, see Athenaeus 6.253a). The same formulation – praise for actions benefitting kings, Greeks and Athens – appears in IG II² 555 (307-3), lines 2-4. IG II² 558 (302) praises Oxythemis of Larisa for his 'goodness to the kings and to the *demos* of Athens' (lines 7-9), 'in order to encourage emulation in all those who unhesitatingly compete for the favour of the kings and the freedom of the Greeks' (lines 11-14); on Oxythemis and his good deeds, see Bielman 1994: no. 15. Osborne D51, honours for Nicomedes of Cos, may include (at lines 5-6) a reference to 'being a good man (ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός) and displaying his goodwill and *philotimia* to all Greeks', but the restoration of this extremely fragmentary text is very uncertain.

particularly concerned with fostering 'anything of advantage to the kings and the Greeks' (*StV* 446, lines 83-4). Indeed, one of the presidents of that League – Adeimantos of Lampsacus – is honoured by the Athenians for his '*prothumia* and *eunoia* to the Athenian people and the allies (?) and all the Greeks' (*Agora* 16.122 (c.302), lines 23-5).³⁷

Even so, the novelty of these decrees – and of their implications – should not be underestimated. In diplomatic terms, the Hellenic League is far from innovative: it stands in a tradition of Greek multilateral organisations which stretches (ultimately) back to the Delian League, and which has a clear recent predecessor in Philip II's League of Corinth.³⁸ As has been seen, such leagues typically made some sort of claim about uniting, protecting or defending the Greeks, but were also typically reluctant to allow such claims to be voiced by anyone other than the hegemonial (or imperial) power. The language which appears in these Athenian decrees suggests that Demetrius and Antigonos were encouraging or allowing a move away from the self-obsessed Panhellenism visible earlier in the century, and towards a model which is perhaps rather closer (in its presentation, at least) to the more co-operative, *homonoia*-dominated, picture of Panhellenic action championed by Isocrates.

3.3 Panhellenism, imperialism, and nostalgia

The last years of the fourth century do, then, mark an important development in the political use of Panhellenic language. But it is worth noting that the old ways of thinking do not disappear. If anything, in fact, it seems possible that the Antigonid enthusiasm for this new style of Panhellenism encouraged the Athenians to engage a renewed flurry of their own preferred way of representing their concern for the Greeks, and of asserting the connection between Panhellenism and their own political power.

A small cluster of decrees is passed in this period which retrospectively honour men for their assistance during the Lamian War of 323-2. The first of these is dated to 306/5: Timosthenes of Carystos is honoured,

³⁷ The reference to allies is restored, and is questioned by Badian & Martin 1985. *IG* XII.9 198 records Eretrian honours for Adeimantos, for his '*arete* and *philotimia* towards the *polis* of Eretria' (lines 10-11); a preamble to the decree added thanks to Demetrius for his goodwill and support for the Greeks and the *demos* of Eretria (lines 3-6). The Athenian honours for Nicomedes of Cos (above, n. 36) are preserved as part of a dossier which includes similar honours from at least nine other *poleis* or groups (Herzog 1942: 12-20, *I.Cos* 71C).

³⁸ For the League of Corinth see RO 76; on its adaptation of existing diplomatic traditions, Perlman 1985.

because in the previous war which the Athenian *demos* fought against Antipater on behalf of the freedom of the Greeks ([ὕπερ τῆς ἐλ]ευθερίας τῶν [Ε]λλή[νων]) he was sent by the *synedros* of Carystos to the camp of the Athenians and allies and fought for their safety, speaking and doing what was beneficial both for the *demos* of Athens and for the Carystians (Osborne, *Naturalization* D43, lines 6-12).

Two more decrees (*IG* II² 505, 506) were passed in 302/1, also awarding retrospective honours for services rendered in the Lamian War, and referring to it as the ‘Hellenic War’ (*IG* II² 505, line 17; *IG* II² 506, lines 9-10).³⁹ This was not a new claim: Hyperides’ funeral oration is suffused with this idea, as has been seen, and (as has also been seen) the specific language of acting ‘on behalf of the freedom of the Greeks’ also has a near epigraphic precedent in the posthumous honours voted for Euphron of Sicyon in 318/7 (although the inclusion of ‘freedom’ in the formula is a new development here).⁴⁰ But the revival, and repetition of this language is in many ways as revealing as the innovations visible in other decrees of the period: Athens had undergone a series of political upheavals since the Lamian War, and even now – with some sort of democracy restored – was in no position to make serious claims about fighting for the freedom of others; rather, they were now a *polis* on which other, greater, powers would claim to bestow freedom.⁴¹ But while Demetrius’ encouragement of Panhellenic language seems to have provided a way for him to foster his own imperial power, and to demonstrate Athens’ less dominant role, it seems not to have hampered the Athenians from reactivating their own favoured way of conceptualising Panhellenic politics: that is, the model in which they are the sun around which all Panhellenic activity revolves.

³⁹ There seems to have been a wider revival of interest in (or revival in the acceptability of commemorating) the Lamian War in this period, although the Panhellenic element of the war is not consistently emphasised: *IG* II² 493 (honours for Nikon of Abydos, 303/2) also includes retrospective praise for services in the Lamian War (here referred to as ‘the former war’: lines 19f). A reference to the war has also been seen in *IG* II² 492 (see p. 000 above for this decree, and Tracey 1995: 28, n. 34 for the reading). A similar urge to commemorate newly-respectable events of the 320s must underpin the posthumous honours voted to Lycurgus in 307/6 (*IG* II² 457).

⁴⁰ As noted above (n. 31), the restoration of this phrase in the (probably earlier decree) *IG* II² 270 seems unlikely to be correct, and has been omitted from the revised edition of this inscription in *IG* III³ 1, 517.

⁴¹ D.S. XX.45.4 characterises the regime of Demetrius of Poliorcetes as a return of freedom to Athens; that the language of liberation was used by Demetrius himself is implied by *SEG* 36.164, an honorific decree for Sotimos of Cyrene which reports a letter from Demetrius to Athens, praising the honorand as ‘a friend to him [Demetrius], a supporter of the affairs of the kings and the freedom of the Athenian *demos*, and a champion of the democracy’ (lines 12-14; compare *SEG* 36.163, *SEG* 25.145, *IG* II² 559 + 568).

4. Conclusion

The discourse of political Panhellenism is remarkably persistent and pervasive, and, particularly in the final third of the fourth century, notably consistent. This in itself should perhaps not be terribly surprising: Panhellenism is in many ways a fundamentally nostalgic ideology, and Greek diplomacy in general is equally committed to arguments based on precedent and tradition. But the persistence of Panhellenic ideology is enabled, at least in part, by the flexibility of the ideals and actions which to which the Panhellenic label can be applied. It is this flexibility which can help to explain why even the biggest political upheavals of fourth-century interstate politics – the Battle of Chaeronea, the Lamian War – do not seem radically to affect the ways in which Panhellenic arguments and assertions are deployed in Athenian sources.

Does this ubiquity and continuity equate to serious political importance, or is it in fact a symptom of irrelevance? I would not want to claim any sort of correlation between the pervasiveness of this concept and the sincerity with which claims to be fighting for the Greeks were made (or understood), either before or after Chaeronea – not because such claims were necessarily always insincere (we are surely not in a position ever to confidently know if they were), but because to focus on the ‘truth’ of Panhellenic arguments is to miss the point. Political Panhellenism, whether true or not, was useful, and it is this utility which ensured its consistent visibility in Athenian political discourse in the Classical period. For the Athenians, even (or especially) in the face of dramatically changing circumstances, Panhellenism remained a vital diplomatic comfort blanket, to which they could unfailingly cling; which – in the 330s and 320s – they could use to swat away any suspicions of imperial insignificance; and with which finally, in the last decade of the century, they could shield their eyes from upsetting new political realities.

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